

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 5311

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 CAIRO 7171

NODIS/CHEROKEE

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

EO 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR EG US IS

SUBJECT: SECOND MEETING WITH SADAT AND EGYPTIAN COUNTERPROPOSALS

REF: CAIRO 7122

1. AS ARRANGED LAST NIGHT, I MET WITH PRESIDENT SADAT AT 2030 THIS EVENING. VENUE WAS AT THE PYRAMIDS REST HOUSE, WHERE THE PRESIDENT HAD SPENT MOST OF THE DAY GETTING READY FOR HIS JULY 22 SPEECH AND, AS HE PUT IT TO ME, REFLECTING ON THE LATEST ISRAELI PROPOSAL. ALSO PRESENT WERE VP MOBAREK, PRIMIN MAMDUH SALEM, FAHMY AND GAMASY. SUMMARY OF MY HOUR AND ONE-HALF LONG MEETING, WHICH INCLUDED RECEIVING AN EGYPTIAN COUNTERPROPOSAL AND A SECOND, FALLBACK PROPOSAL, IS REPORTED BELOW.

2. SADAT FIRST NOTED THAT, UPON CHECKING, IT WAS FOUND THAT THE ISRAELI FORWARD LINE IS NOT RPT NOT OUTSIDE EITHER THE MITLA OR GIDI PASSES. THE EGYPTIANS HAD TRANSPOSED THE LINES AS DRAWN ON THE ISRAELI MAP TO AN EGYPTIAN MAP OF THE SAME SCALE. WHEN THEY DID SO, THEY FOUND THAT THE ISRAELI FORWARD LINE IS BETWEEN TWO AND ONE-HALF AND THREE KILOMETERS INSIDE THE EASTERN ENTRANCES OF THE TWO PASSES. HOWEVER, THE ISRAELI MAIN FORCE LINE IS INDEED

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ABOUT 350 METERS OUTSIDE OF THE EASTERN ENTRANCES OF

THE PASSES. GAMASY SHOWED ME THE EGYPTIAN PLOTTED LINE PURPORTING TO DEMONSTRATE THIS. I AGAIN WENT THROUGH MY EXPLANATION OF LAST NIGHT BASED ON STATE 170879 IN THE CASE OF GIDI AND THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE ISRAELI FORWARD LINE TO PARKER'S MEMORIAL IN THE CASE OF MITLA. GAMASY STATED THAT THEY CANNOT IDENTIFY THE 750 METER MARK MENTIONED BY THE ISRAELIS. HE CLAIMED IT IS NOT ON ANY EGYPTIAN MAPS. NOR DID HE HAVE ANY IDEA WHERE THE PARKER MEMORIAL WAS. ANYONE CAN SEE, GAMASY ASSERTED, WHERE THE DEFILES BEGIN. THESE ARE THE PASS ENTRANCES. SADAT OPINED THAT THIS WAS DELIBERATE ISRAELI DECEPTION, BUT ASKED FOR CLARIFICATION.

3. EGYPTIAN COUNTERPROPOSAL: SADAT THEN RECALLED THE OBJECTIONS HE HAD EXPRESSED LAST NIGHT TO THE LATEST ISRAELI PROPOSAL AND AFFIRMED THAT AN EGYPTIAN COUNTERPROPOSAL HAD BEEN PREPARED. HE INSTRUCTED GAMASY TO GIVE ME A MAP DEPICTING THE EGYPTIAN COUNTERPROPOSAL AND TO EXPLAIN IT. THIS GAMASY DID WITH FREQUENT INTERVENTIONS BY SADAT, MOBAREK AND FAHMY. FAHMY MADE THE POINT THAT IT WAS DRAWN UP IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE ISRAELI PROPOSAL, AS WE HAD SUGGESTED. THE ESSENTIAL POINTS OF THE EGYPTIAN COUNTERPROPOSAL FOLLOW:

A) THE ISRAELI FORWARD LINE IS SO DRAWN THAT IT IS CLEARLY OUT OF THE EASTERN ENTRANCE OF THE GIDI AND MITLA PASSES WITH THE MAIN FORCE LINE SLIGHTLY TO THE EAST OF IT. SADAT NOTED THAT IF THE ISRAELI INTENTION IS INDEED TO HAVE THEIR FORWARD LINE JUST OUTSIDE OF THE EASTERN ENTRANCES OF THE PASSES AND THE ISSUE HAD SIMPLY BECOME CONFUSED BECAUSE OF THE PLOTTING OF LINES ON THE MAP, THEN THERE WAS NO PROBLEM ON THIS POINT. GAMASY OBSERVED THAT FROM A MILITARY POINT OF VIEW, THE ISRAELIS WOULD BE ABLE TO DEPLOY FORCES FROM THEIR FORWARD LINE AS REDRAWN BY THE EGYPTIANS TO THE EASTERN ENTRANCES OF THE PASSES WITHIN A MATTER OF A FEW MINUTES. THUS, HE CONTENTED, THE ISRAELIS ARE IN NO WAY MILITARILY DISADVANTAGED BY LOCATING THEIR FORWARD LINE JUST

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OUTSIDE THE EASTERN ENTRANCE.

B) THE NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN EXTENSIONS OF THE ISRAELI FORWARD LINE ARE REDRAWN TO CORRESPOND WITH THE ISRAELI PROPOSAL OF LAST MONTH, I.E. THE "BLUE LINE". GAMASY HAD AND GAVE ME AN OVERLAY FROM THE ISRAELI PROPOSAL OF JUNE, 1975 FOR USE IN CONNECTION WITH THE EGYPTIAN COUNTERPROPOSAL MAP.

IT DEMONSTRATES THAT, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE PASSES SALIENT, THE EGYPTIANS SIMPLY TOOK THE EARLIER ISRAELI FORWARD LINE AND INCORPORATED IT INTO THEIR NEW COUNTERPROPOSAL. THE SAME IS TRUE OF THE ISRAELI MAIN FORCE LINE.

C) IN THE ACCESS CORRIDOR AREA, THE EGYPTIAN COUNTERPROPOSAL IS THE SAME AS THE ISRAELI PROPOSAL WITH TWO EXCEPTIONS: FIRST, THE HAMAM FARAUN AREA IS ALREADY HATCHED IN AS UNDER EGYTIAN CIVILIAN ADMINISTRATION. SECOND, IN THE CASE OF THE TWO CONTROVERSIAL SECTIONS OF ROAD, THE EGYPTIAN COUNTERPROPOSAL SKETCHES IN TWO ALTERNATE INLAND TRACKS WHICH CAN BE USED FOR WHEELED VEHICLES AND JEEPS. AS I HAD SUSPECTED WOULD BE THE CASE, THE TWO PROPOSED ALTERNATE ROADS/TRACKS RUN PRETTY FAR INLAND IN LARGE ARCS. GAMASY STATED HE KNOWS THE AREA WELL AND HAS HIMSELF DRIVEN ON THESE TRACKS. SADAT OBSERVED THAT HE IS SURE THE ISRAELIS ALREADY KNOW ABOUT THESE TRACKS. IF THE ISRAELIS ARE SERIOUS ABOUT BEING WILLING TO MOVE THEIR ROAD INLAND, IF SUITABLE LOCATIONS CAN BE FOUND, SADAT CONTENTED THE PROPOSED ALTERNATE ROADS SHOULD SERVE THE PURPOSE.

D) ALL RPT ALL OF THE SIX PROPOSED US MILITARY POSTS IN THE GIDI AND MITLA PASS AREA ARE ELIMINATED. QUOTING A PHRASE HE SAID HE LEARNED FROM PRESIDENT FORD, SADAT CLAIMED SUCH US MILITARY POSTS ON EGYPTIAN SOIL ARE "NOT SALEABLE" TO HIS OWN PEOPLE, THE ARABS OR THE SOVIETS. HE WOULD BE CHARGED WITH HAVING EXPELLED SOVIET MILITARY EXPERTS IN ORDER TO BRING IN AMERICANS. HE SUSPECTED THERE WOULD ALSO BE CONGRESSIONAL DIFFICULTIES FOR THE US ADMINISTRATION IN TRYING TO PUT FORTH SUCH AN IDEA.

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E) WITH RESPECT TO THE ISRAELI MONITORING STATION AT JEBAL UMM KHUSHAIB, THIS SHOULD NOT RPT NOT BE UNDER US ADMINISTRATION WITH ISRAELI TECHNICAL MANNING, INSTEAD, AS HE HAD DISCUSSED WITH PRESIDENT FORD, THE STATION SHOULD BE MANNED BY AMERICAN CIVILIANS. I AGAIN POINTED OUT THAT WE LACK THE TECHNICAL PERSONNEL TO OPERATE THE STATION ON A CONTINUING BASIS. SADAT RESPONDED THAT IT SHOULD NOT TAKE MORE THAN 50 OR 60 PEOPLE AND CONTENTED WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO FIND THAT NUMBER. HE ASKED THAT WE TRY TO DO SO. THE ISRAELIS SHOULD NOT RPT NOT BE IN THE STATION. ALTERNATIVELY, IF THE ISRAELIS DO NOT AGREE TO AMERICAN MANNING, THE STATION SHOULD BE UNDER THE UNITED NATIONS. HE DID NOT RPT NOT

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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 5312

S E C R E T FINAL SECTION OF 2 CAIRO 7171

NODIS CHEROKEE

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

SPELL OUT EXACTLY WHAT HE MEANT AND I THOUGHT IT
BEST NOT TO ENCOURAGE THIS IDEA BY ASKING FOR ELABORA-
TION.

F) A SIMILAR EGYPTIAN MONITORING STATION SHOULD
BE ESTABLISHED AT JEBAL HAITAN JUST SOUTH OF MITLA
PASS. THIS, TOO, SHOULD BE MANNED BY AMERICAN
CIVILIANS OR, ALTERNATIVELY, COME UNDER THE UN.

G) THE PROPOSED MONITORING INSTALLATION AT
HAMAN FARAUN SHOULD ALSO BE MANNED BY AMERICANS OR,
ALTERNATIVELY, COME UNDER THE UN.

H) IN ADDITION, TWO EGYPTIAN WARNING STATIONS
SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED IN THE NORTHERN PART OF THE
BUFFER ZONE. ONE WOULD BE AT ROMANA LOCATED WHERE
THE COASTAL ROAD ENTERS THE UNEF BUFFER ZONE FROM
THE WEST AND THE SECOND WOULD BE ABOUT MIDWAY ON THE
ISMAILIA ROAD AS IT PASSES THROUGH THE BUFFER ZONE.
THESE WARNING STATIONS, GAMASY EXPLAINED, WOULD HAVE
SMALL PERSONNEL COMPLEMENTS AND BE EQUIPED WITH
WIRELESS SETS. THEIR MISSION WOULD BE TO GIVE
WARNING OF POSSIBLE ISRAELI AIR OR GROUND ATTACKS.
SHOULD THE ISRAELIS PROVE TO BE ADAMANT ABOUT THE
JEBAL UMM KHUSHAIB STATION, SADAT STATED THE EGYPTIANS
DO NOT IN THAT CASE WANT THE JEBAL HAITAN MONITORING

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STATION, BUT DO RPT DO WANT THE TWO WARNING STATIONS
ALONG THE COASTAL AND ISMAILIA ROADS. THESE WARNING
STATIONS WOULD BE UNDER THE UN.

I) TWO EGYPTIAN COMPANY SIZE POSTS SHOULD BE
IN THE UNEF BUFFER ZONE ASTRIDE THE ROAD LEADING
TO THE MITLA PASS. NO RPT NO SUCH COMPANY STRENGTH
POSTS ARE WANTED IN THE WESTERN APPROACHES TO THE
GIDI PASS. WHEN I ASKED WHY TWO SUCH POSTS ON
THE MITLA APPROACHES, GAMASY FIRST CONTENDED THE
EARLIER ISRAELI PROPOSAL HAD OFFERED THIS. I RECALLED
THE EARLIER ISRAELI PROPOSAL HAD SHOWN ONE
SUCH POST AT THE WESTERN END OF EACH OF THE TWO
PASSES. SADAT INTERVENED TO SAY IT IS IMMATERIAL
TO HIM WHETHER THERE ARE ONE OR TWO POSTS, BUT THEY
SHOULD BE AT MITLA, NOT GIDI.

J) FINALLY, THE EGYPTIAN FORWARD LINE IS
MOVED EASTWARD BY BETWEEN 4 AND 6 KILOMETERS
FROM THE PRESENT UNEF LINE. THE PURPOSE HERE,
GAMASY EXPLAINED, IS TO KEEP THE EGYPTIAN TROOPS
30 KILOMETERS OR SO EAST OF THE SUEZ CANAL TO SECURE
THE CANAL CITIES AND THE CANAL ITSELF. IT IS IN
FACT 30 KILOMETERS FROM THE CANAL IN THE NORTH
AND 25 KILOMETERS IN THE SUEZ AREA. THIS WOULD
BE AN AREA OF LIMITED ARMAMENTS AND THINNED OUT
FORCES. UNEF WOULD RETAIN THE LATERAL ROAD IN
THAT SECTOR.

4. EGYPTIAN FALLBACK PROPOSAL: AFTER WE HAD GONE
OVER THE MAP AND GAMASY'S EXPLANATION, SADAT SUDDENLY
INTRODUCED A SECOND, FALLBACK PROPOSAL AS OF POSSIBLE
HELP TO YOU. IF THE ISRAELIS ARE ADAMANT ABOUT THE
JEBAL UMM KHUSHAIB STATION AND THEIR FORWARD LINE AT
THE EASTERN ENTRANCE OF THE PASSES AND ARE UNWILLING
TO GO BACK TO THE FORMER BLUE LINE IN THE NORTH AND
SOUTH WHICH THEY PROPOSED LAST MONTH, THE PRESIDENT, WOULD BE READY
TO ACCEPT THE LATEST ISRAELI PROPOSAL, BUT WITH THE FOLLOWING
MODIFICATIONS:

A) IN THE AREA OF THE TWO CONTROVERSIAL STRETCHES
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OF ROAD ALON THE GULF OF SUEZ, THE ISRAELIS MUST

MOVE THE ROAD INLAND TO THE ALREADY SUGGESTED
ALTERNATIVE TRACKS.

B) THERE SHOULD BE NO RPT NO AMERICAN MILITARY
POSTS IN THE PASS AREAS FOR THE REASON ALREADY
INDICATED.

C) IN PLACE OF THE PROPOSED EGYPTIAN MONITORING
STATION AT JEBAL HAITRAN, THE TWO ALREADY MENTIONED
EGYPTIAN WARNING STATIONS SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED
ON THE COAST AND ISMAILIA ROADS.

D) THE EGYPTIAN MAIN FORCES LINE SHOULD MOVE
FROM ITS PRESENT LOCATION WEST OF THE CANAL, TO THE
PRESENT EGYPTIAN FORWARD LINE IN SINAI, I.E. EAST
OF THE CANAL. THE EGYPTIAN FORWARD LINE SHOULD BE
MOVED TO THE PRESENT UN LINE.

5. SADAT PROVIDED NO RPT NO MAP FOR THIS FALLBACK
PROPOSAL, BUT IT IS NO PROBLEM PLOTTING IT FROM
THE LATEST ISRAELI PROPOSAL AND THE EGYPTIAN
COUNTERPROPOSAL MAPS.

6. I TOLD THE PRESIDENT I WOULD IMMEDIATELY SEND
YOU AN ACCOUNT OF OUR TALK AND WOULD ALSO ARRANGE
TO SEND THE EGYPTIAN MAP AND OVERLAY TO WASHINGTON
TOMORROW BY SPECIAL COURIER. YOU WOULD HAVE IT BY
TOMORROW NIGHT.

7. COMMENT: SADAT'S COUNTER AND FALLBACK PROPOSALS,
WHILE THEY ARE MORE THAN THE ISRAELIS HAVE THUS FAR
BEEN WILLING TO GIVE, SHOW GREATER FLEXIBILITY THAN
HAVE ANY OF HIS PAST IDEAS. HE SUDDENLY SEEMS
ANXIOUS TO REACH AN AGREEMENT SO LONG AS IT GIVES
HIM SOMETHING TO WHICH HE CAN POINT AS A SUCCESS
AND WHICH SATISFIES THE HONOR OF THE MILITARY.
FROM HIS SEVERAL INTERJECTIONS I GAINED THE IMPRESSION
HE IS CONVINCED THE ISRAELIS ARE OUT PERSONALLY
TO HUMILIATE HIM BY THEIR MISERLY TERMS. THERE IS
A POINT BEYOND WHICH HE WILL NOT GO IN HUMBLING
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HIMSELF, BUT AFTER THIS EVENING'S SESSION IT IS
HARD TO SAY JUST WHERE THAT POINT IS. HE LOOKS
TO US, ALMOST DESPERATELY AND WITH A CERTAIN SENSE
OF RUEFUL DISAPPOINTMENT AT OUR INABILITY THUS FAR TO EXTRACT
MORE FROM THE ISRAELIS, TO HELP HIM REACH
AN AGREEMENT WHICH HE CAN DEFEND BEFORE HIS PEOPLE
AND THE ARAB WORLD AND WHICH WILL NOT EARN HIM BRICKBATS
FROM HIS CRITICS AT HOME AND ABROAD. INTERESTINGLY

ENOUGH, THE EGYPTIAN STRATEGISTS SEEM LESS CONCERNED
ABOUT SECURING THEMSELVES IN THE MITLA AND GIDA
PASS AREAS, BUT ARE SUDDENLY MAINLY CONCERNED ABOUT
AN ISRAELI ATTACK ALONG THE COASTAL AND ISMAILIA
RAOD AXES AS EVIDENCED BY THE GREAT IMPORTANCE
SADAT ATTACHES TO THE TWO WARNING STATION.
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